

COLDITZ COVE
CLASS II NATURAL-SCIENTIFIC STATE NATURAL AREA

COUNTY:	Fentress	ACREAGE:	165
7.5° QUADRANGLE:	Grimsley and Burrville	OWNERSHIP:	State of Tennessee
PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:	Cumberland Plateau	YEAR DESIGNATED:	1973

DESCRIPTION:

Colditz Cove is a 165-acre natural area located approximately 2 miles east of Allardt, Tennessee in Fentress County. Its most impressive feature is Northrup Falls, which plunges more than 60 feet over a protruding rock ledge into a scenic, narrow, gorge along Big Branch Creek. The waterfall is named for the family who settled here and operated a mill above the falls in the 1800's. These high cliffs and "rock houses" (cave-like overhangs) at the falls and along the creek gorge, were once used by cliff-dwelling Woodland Indians over 3,000 years ago for shelter while hunting.

The dry ridges above the falls support a mixed oak-hickory forest dominated by white oak with Virginia pine scattered. On the more xeric southwest bluff, oaks, hemlock, Virginia and short leaf pine are common along with a shrub layer of mountain laurel. There are large hemlocks and white pines believed to be over 200 years old prominently growing below the falls along Big Branch Creek. A dense thicket of rhododendron grows beneath this canopy. The spray field from the falls creates a unique habitat on the rock ledges beneath the falls that support several species of ferns, sedges, rushes, and plants like grass-of-parnassus, and alumroot.

In addition to its scenic value and pristine plant communities, Colditz Cove is also home to several relatively rare animals including the black mountain dusky salamander (*Desmognathus welteri*), the woodland jumping mouse (*Napaeozapus insignis*), the smoky shrew (*Sorex fumeus*), the pygmy shrew (*Sorex hoyi*), and the southeastern shrew (*Sorex longirostris*).

SITE MANAGEMENT:

Pickett State Park, Rock Creek Route, Box 174, Jamestown, TN 38556, (931) 879-5821. Division of Natural Heritage, 401 Church Street, 14th Floor L&C Tower, Nashville, TN 37243-0447, (615) 532-0431.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

Public access is allowed; parking and hiking trails are provided.

DIRECTIONS:

From I-40 near Crossville, Tennessee, take Highway 127 North toward Jamestown. Before getting to Jamestown, turn right on State Route 296 east, toward the town of Allardt. In Allardt, take State Route 52 east. Just outside of town, but still within a residential area, turn right on Northrup Falls Road (County Road 1636). The sign for Colditz Cove State Natural Area is on the right about 1 mile down Northrup Falls Road. Off-road parking is available for approximately six cars.